



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Rep. Brostoff Statement on Arena Deal “No” Vote

I want the Bucks to stay in Milwaukee and do not oppose building a new arena, but I could not support today’s proposal. It is a bad deal for my neighbors in this Assembly District and for Milwaukee County.

Governor Walker and his legislative allies argued that the Bucks will leave Milwaukee if public funding is not given. They claimed that we “cannot afford” the negative economic impact of the Bucks’ departure from Milwaukee and that there will be a huge positive economic impact if the team remains, but sports economists found that there is no evidence to support a connection between sports facility construction and economic development.

There have also been estimates of lost revenue as well as job creation projections, but these numbers vary greatly depending on the source. Of course no one opposes economic development, but our community would be far better served, in contrast to the current arena proposal, by not slashing the funding of UW-Milwaukee and the UW System as a whole— a system that generates \$24 in economic activity for each \$1 spent.

The hundreds of millions cut from UW System funding should be restored; that will produce jobs in the state. Our public education, criminal justice system, environmental protection efforts, road maintenance, public transportation, and so many other public services all cry out for greater support, yet all of them are diminished by the subsidies and tax breaks that anchor this proposal. Wiping out decades in public investment to support our community's most vulnerable and needy to pay for this arena is wrong.

Milwaukee County, which has had more than its fair share of recent struggles, is now being asked, via the arena proposal, to shoulder an additional \$80 million in legacy costs. It would be taken from some of our community's most vulnerable and needy by further cutting services such as Milwaukee County's mental healthcare system. I could not support such a plan.

I understand this is an emotional and important issue. I have listened carefully to neighbors, consulted with colleagues, and worked to get a better deal, one that would build the arena with consideration to the needs, interests, and values of our community. The proposal today was a bad deal for the residents of this Assembly District and for Milwaukee County. I am saddened, because I know that we could have done better, but absolutely resolute in my decision to vote “No.” Many people want to see this arena get built, myself included, but not like this.

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